

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A method and associated apparatus for announcing and identifying metadata relating to available video programs and/or enhancements in an enhanced television communications system compliant with the standard set forth by the Advanced Television Enhancement Forum (ATVEF). In particular, the method provides for a new attribute to the existing Session Description Protocol (SDP) announcement specified by the ATVEF standard which is used by client receivers to access metadata. Metadata is data that describes other data, in particular, that describe available video programs and/or enhancements transmitted by a content creator and/or transport operator. The new SDP announcement provides a Universally Unique Identifier (UUID) to allow client receivers to identify the incoming metadata. Additionally, the new SDP announcement further can provide the address and/or port if the metadata is located on a network database. After receiving this new SDP announcement, a client receiver can retrieve the metadata and store it in its local memory. The client receiver may present the metadata to the user to allow the user to select which one or more television programs and/or enhancements to download and view or merely to store for later use. Or, the client receiver may be automatically programmed to receive the television program and/or enhancement based on a specified criteria and information provided in the metadata.